

A Guide to Fighting Food Insecurity in Delaware County

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

Kaes Petroviak

Thesis Advisor

Dr. Ben Angelo

Ball State University

Muncie, Indiana

May 2020

Date of Graduation

May 2020

Abstract

Food insecurity has become a nationwide issue that is rapidly spreading and affects more than 10% of Americans. This equates to 30 million people who are unsure of where their next meal will come from. The issue of food insecurity is exacerbated in small communities that already suffer from increased levels of poverty. One such community is Muncie, Indiana and the entirety of Delaware County. Fortunately, there are people and organizations that are actively fighting against this growing epidemic. This thesis introduces the facts behind food insecurity and analyzes the operations of Second Harvest ECI in order to create a distributable pamphlet that guides people who strive to open and operate a successful food pantry or soup kitchen.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Angelo for consistently pushing me to create the best possible project in order to help the most amount of people.

I would like to thank my family and friends for always supporting me in my life and academic endeavors.

I would like to thank Tim Kean and the entire staff at Second Harvest ECI for their dedication to the betterment of the lives of people who need it most.

Process Analysis Statement

This thesis was conducted in a three-part procedure. The first part of the thesis focuses on the actual issue of food insecurity. I gathered my research using academic journals and the websites of the USDA, Feeding America, and Second Harvest of East Central Indiana. I highlighted the major statistics and factors that are the key issues that are intertwined with the issue of food insecurity. The second part of this thesis involved analyzing Second Harvest ECI as an organization, involving both their operations and financial statements. This information was gathered using their website and an interview. The final piece was the creation of a resource, in the form of a pamphlet. This pamphlet condenses the information from the first two parts and includes my recommendations for the most important parts of creating or maintaining a soup kitchen or food pantry.

The process for this thesis began my freshman year at Ball State, as the idea of writing a thesis loomed over my head right from the beginning. I knew that I wanted to incorporate skills and knowledge that I would be exposed to in the classroom, but also create something meaningful. Being from a family that valued volunteerism and giving back to the community, I knew that I wanted to put an emphasis on a social or economic issue facing the community that I was raised in. I chose the topic of food insecurity, namely in Delaware County, because I witnessed the effects of hunger firsthand while going to school at Muncie Central High School. Many of my peers were suffering and were dependent on the free and reduced lunch program offered by the school. Knowing that some of your friends are going to bed hungry every night is nearly impossible to comprehend as a teenager.

I was also led to this issue through my fraternity, Lambda Chi Alpha. Our national philanthropy partner is Feeding America, who is represented locally by Second Harvest of East

Central Indiana. I was able to create meaningful relationships with their staff over my four years of membership in Lambda Chi Alpha, while also helping raise over \$20,000 in that timespan through our various fundraising events. I quickly understood the level of impact they had on my home community and wanted to make them the cornerstone for this thesis. After early meetings with my advisor, we decided that we should create something physical to distribute to those looking to contribute their time and resources through the foundation of a soup kitchen or food pantry.

The pamphlet that was created is the culmination of everything that I have learned through the classroom, from my relationship with Second Harvest ECI, and the research performed for this thesis. My advisor and I wanted to narrow the scope of the pamphlet down to the core building blocks of a successful charity or business entity. We started with efficient operations because it encompasses how effective an organization is at accomplishing its goal. For a charity, this means providing the greatest amount of good to the largest amount of people. This starts with understanding the need and demand. If nobody wants what you are offering, your operation will fail. We also discussed that it is important to have the right type and amount of labor, as paying too much will take away from giving the most back to the community but not having enough labor will slow everything down. Mastery of this balance will help the organization thrive.

Financial health was another major area of focus because money is the lifeblood of any business or charity, and it is the area that is most related to my major of study. Simple tips regarding financial stability can go a long way and any operator wanting to start a new soup kitchen or food pantry would benefit from the benchmarks provided in the pamphlet. I also thought it was pertinent to add the health and safety regulations, because there are many complex rules that go into opening and operating an organization that handles food. Having a strong knowledge is important to

keeping the people who come in safe, but also ensuring that operations continue. Finally, marketing and advertising was included because if nobody knows about the charity, then nobody will come and get help. The most important part of any charity is that people in need know that they have help available, so a good soup kitchen or food pantry will utilize and incorporate the best methods to reach the right audience.

Through this thesis, I learned a great deal about the scope and severity of food insecurity in Delaware County. I learned about the damaging effects that hunger has on the body, and also how it contributes to the cycle of poverty. However, I was reminded that there is hope. People like the staff at Second Harvest ECI, who dedicate their lives to ending food insecurity, prove that it only takes one dollar or hour of volunteering to save a life. In writing this thesis, I faced considerable obstacles, namely the Covid-19 pandemic. While this proved to be a bump in the road, it also illuminated to me how important the information provided here can help prevent people going hungry, even in the face of a pandemic. Every ounce of effort helps.

1. Introduction

Food insecurity is a nationwide issue that needs the focus of all Americans. The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines food insecurity as a lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life (U.S. Hunger, 2020). Small towns with aging populations and decreasing job opportunities are particularly susceptible to the challenges of food insecurity. One such town is Muncie, Indiana. In Muncie, around 30% of people live at or below the poverty line. Poverty contributes to a greater risk of becoming food insecure (Muncie, IN, 2020). Organizations like Second Harvest of East Central Indiana (Second Harvest, 2020) combat the growing epidemic of food insecurity through food distribution and educational programming for both those currently suffering from food insecurity and those in danger of becoming food insecure. Small organizations, like soup kitchens, food pantries, and churches, are also working to ensure that individuals and families facing food insecurity have access to a hot meal or to a bag of nonperishable goods in a convenient and quick manner. Many of these small organizations operate with a heavily constrained budget. This project is designed to address the complex socioeconomic issues of food insecurity and create a pamphlet to be distributed to small-scale organizations to help them operate effectively, efficiently, and under proper federal regulations.

2. Food Insecurity

There are four levels to the food security pyramid (U.S. Hunger, 2020). The first level is High Food Security. Households at this level had no anxiety or problems about the quality or quantity of food available to them. The second level is Marginal Food Security. Households at this level had issues concerning the adequacy of the food available to them but no substitutions or disruptions in dietary patterns occurred. These top two levels, High Food Security and Marginal Food Security, make up the generalized category of “Food Secure.” The third and fourth levels combined are considered “Food Insecure.” The third level is Low Food Security. Households at this level lowered the quality and types of food they are consuming but have not forgone the quantity. The fourth level is Very Low Food Security. Households at this level had one or more family member experience substantial changes in eating patterns or decreased quantity of consumption due to a lack of resources.

Food security exists on a spectrum and does not discriminate. It can affect people above or below the poverty line. Solving food insecurity is about more than just providing hot meals. It is a need to pull food insecure households up into food security. Food insecurity is more likely to affect seniors, children, rural communities, and some racial minorities. These groups are already statistically more likely to be living in poverty (U.S. Hunger, 2020). Other factors, like living in a single-parent household or living in a food desert, also contribute to food insecurity (U.S. Hunger, 2020). A food desert is an area that lacks easy access to affordable and quality fresh foods. “The USDA Food Environment Atlas shows that rural counties had an average 5.77 percent decrease in the number of grocery stores from 2007-11” (Piontak, 2014). These closings are likely precipitated by the rise of large national chains, such as Walmart. As a result, the size a result the size and

number of food deserts in the United States has increased. This, in turn, increases the number of people that are food secure.

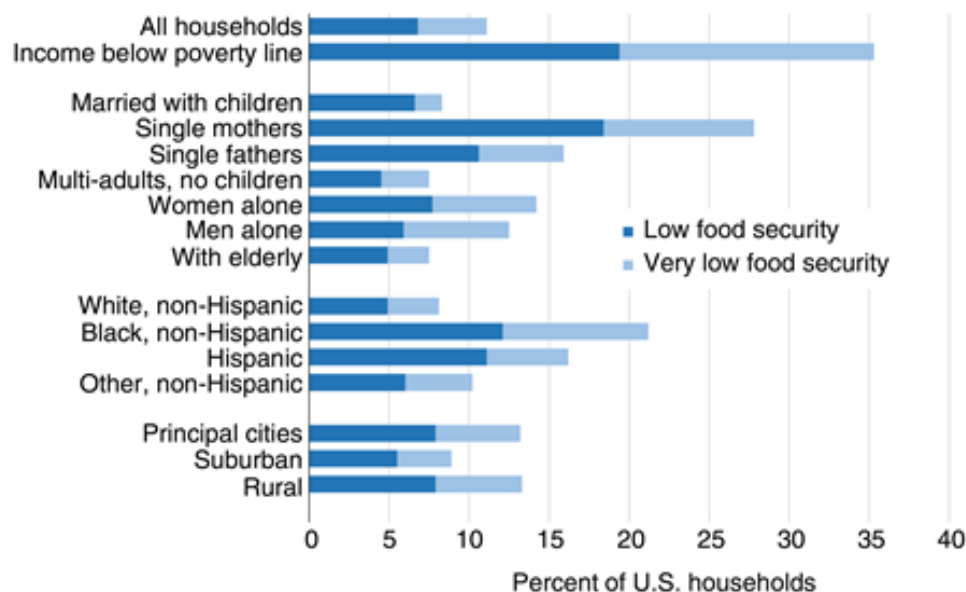


Food insecurity has consequences far beyond hunger. Food insecurity is linked to various health deficiencies. Many of these health deficiencies come about because households substitute inexpensive fast food or processed goods in place of more expensive fresh groceries. Both affordability and access can contribute to this behavior. According to the article “Food Insecurity and Health Across the Lifespan” (2012), “food insecurity may play a direct role in the development of chronic disease among adults and for the next generation.” The article specifies diabetes as one of the more likely chronic diseases due to stress combined with high-fat and high sugar diets.

Based on a study performed by the USDA (2020), in 2018, 11.1 percent of US households were food insecure at some point during the year. This is a slight decrease from the previous year. In 2017, 11.8 percent of US households were food insecure at some point during the year. Despite this decrease, one in seven households with children were affected by food insecurity. However, in half of households affected by food insecurity, the children do not experience the insecurity. Parents in these households are likely to not eat or sacrifice more of their food resources in order

to feed the children. Across the country, the range of food insecurity rates was 7.8 percent to 16.8 percent. The highest levels of food insecurity are in the Southern and Midwest states.

Prevalence of food insecurity by selected household characteristics, 2018



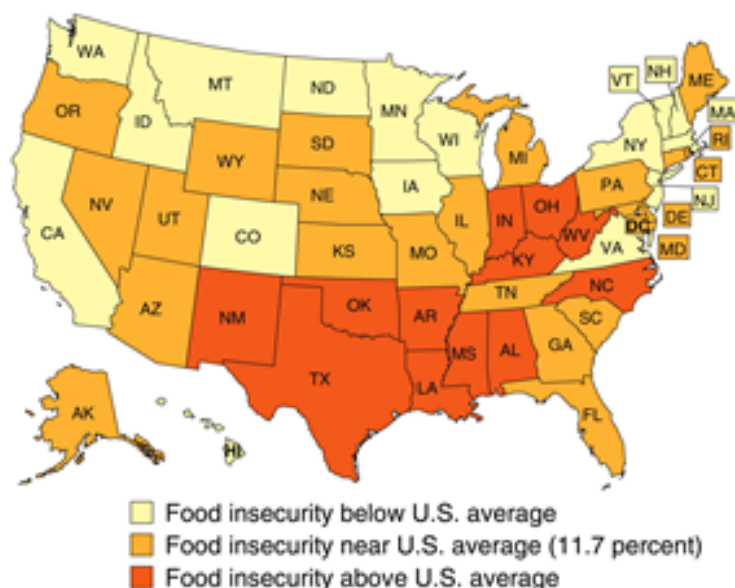
Note: Food-insecure households include those with low food security and very low food security.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the 2018 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement, U.S. Census Bureau.

Indiana is above the national average of food insecurity, which is around 11.7 percent. Outside of Marion County, East Central Indiana counties have some of the highest rates of food insecurity in the state. Of the East Central Indiana Counties, Delaware County has the highest rate of food insecurity at 17.2 percent of all households (Second Harvest, 2020). This translates to approximately 20,150 people who struggle with some level of food insecurity. Further, more than one third of these people do not qualify for SNAP, supplemental nutritional assistance program, the federal assistance program. Among the 20,150 people suffering in Delaware County, 4,280 of these are children, which is just under 20 percent of all children in the county (Second Harvest, 2020). Additionally, around one-fourth of these children are not eligible for the national nutrition assistance program (Second Harvest, 2020). A lack of proper nutrition in children is shown to

lower development and decrease school performance (Lee, 2012). As more children are living in food insecurity, more students are dependent on free and reduced lunch at schools. While these programs are beneficial in the short term, there is no guarantee of food when the children go home.

Prevalence of food insecurity, average 2016-18



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement data, U.S. Census Bureau.

3. Second Harvest

Second Harvest ECI has been in operation for 37 years (Second Harvest, 2020). The organization currently serves the citizens of Delaware, Blackford, Grant, Henry, Jay, Madison, Randolph, and Wabash counties. The combined population of these counties is approximately 457,000 people (Second Harvest, 2020). Unfortunately, around 74,000 of those people are struggling with hunger and food insecurity (Second Harvest, 2020). With an undeniable need, Second Harvest ECI historically operated as a traditional food bank, where people could come get groceries for little to no cost. Second Harvest also operates as a distribution center, partnering with local soup kitchens and food pantries as a major source of food. In the last five years, Second Harvest ECI has added an entirely new focus to their core operations. They now offer in-depth, educational programming to help get to the root of food insecurity.

Second Harvest ECI has split their vision into three different timeframes, short-term, middle-term, and long-term to diversify the level of service and to meet people where they are. These new timeframes facilitate programs to help address the needs of people on all points of the food security spectrum in hopes of pulling up those from the bottom levels of food insecurity and to prevent others from falling. Two of the main goals of all of Second Harvest ECI's operations are to "shorten the line of need" and to "reach the circumstances of food insecurity."¹ The key to the success of Second Harvest ECI's programs lies in their ability to "engage the families to reach a self-sustaining lifestyle."²

In the short-term horizon, Second Harvest ECI focuses mainly on food distribution through four major segments.³ The first segment is the individual family coming into the Second Harvest

¹ Tim Kean, personal communication

² Ibid

³ Ibid

ECI building to receive food. The food is either free or families pay a price that is lower than or equal to prices found at Aldi's, which Second Harvest ECI uses as a benchmark. The second segment is the "tailgate" program. Second Harvest ECI takes a semi load of 30,000 pounds of food to a central location. Families walk or drive up and receive around 30 pounds of food. This amount is the amount of food that will last a week for an average family. Second Harvest ECI calls this amount the "food gap." The tailgate program serves around 300 cars in 2 hours and any individual family can go through the line as many times as they need, no questions asked. The third segment is the senior safety net, which is targeted to the senior citizens of the community. Many seniors have difficulty getting to the distribution facility or other programs. Finally, Second Harvest ECI has a strong distribution program for 97 different food pantry and soup kitchen partners. These smaller organizations must comply with a specific process, rules, and regulations that are laid out by Second Harvest ECI. With these four segments, Second Harvest ECI actively fights against hunger. However, this is only a band-aid solution, which is why they branched out further into their advanced programs.

In the middle-term horizon, Second Harvest ECI focuses on educational programming with their Forward STEPS program.⁴ STEPS is an acronym for Support Transforming Empowerment Pathways to Sustainability. The STEPS program is focused on poverty, a key issue that often goes hand in hand with food insecurity. Oftentimes, the people who need the most help are those living just above the poverty line. These people may not qualify for government assistance. Second Harvest ECI uses the acronym, ALICE, to define these individuals. ALICE stands for Asset Limited Income Constrained, Employed. These families are often forgotten and overlooked because they are employed and have homes, but they are still falling short of meeting all their

⁴ Ibid

needs. The essence of the STEPS program is to engage the person, the family, and the community in collaborative efforts to reach self-determined goals. Second Harvest ECI is determined to meet the families where they are both, in location and in their needs, and also that the relationships with the staff and the community are key to the success of the STEPS program. Families can enroll into the STEPS program directly or they are referred through other social services programs.

Another aspect of the STEPS program is to empower the children of the families to ensure they do not fall into the same troubles as their parents. This is accomplished through extensive childcare and youth enrichment programs, with a focus on financial literacy, put on by Second Harvest ECI in conjunction with Ball State University's sociology department. The final part of the STEPS program is to pair the families in the program with a volunteer sponsor family who helps encourage and support the family on their journey out of poverty. On average, it takes the American family 4 to 7 years to fully emerge from food insecurity. In the STEPS program, it takes a family about 2 to 3 years. The core program takes 16 months and families spend an additional 1 to 2 years in close contact with their sponsor family. The overall goal of the STEPS initiative is to help support and give confidence to families and individuals who are motivated to make a change.

In the long-term horizon, Second Harvest ECI addresses the long-term needs of food insecure people through the Big Idea program.⁵ The Big Idea is a program targeted at children 0-18. It helps these children implement life preparedness from the earliest of stages so that the family will be affected bottom-up and the parents will be involved in the entire process. Second Harvest ECI implements this program through schools. They hold meetings in local K-12 schools once a month to help build relationships between Second Harvest ECI staff, school faculty, and families. During these monthly meetings, Second Harvest ECI arranges for many different and engaging

⁵ Ibid

elements. First, these meetings serve as another point of food distribution. 30 pounds of food is made available for participating families. Additionally, Second Harvest ECI coordinates other community resources to come and set up booths or give presentations that help grow skills or make connections to the participating families. Finally, Second Harvest ECI has programming with a strong emphasis on career readiness to help teach the children about skill and trade professions as an alternative to traditional post-secondary colleges and universities. These programs are intended to help each individual family find the best way to bridge the gap, which also complements their abilities and opportunities. Another key element to the Big Idea is the introduction of families to the Forward STEPS program. The Big Idea program is one of the best recruitment methods for getting families enrolled. This long-term approach is aimed at guiding an entire generation to help prevent them from living in food insecurity and fully breaking the poverty cycle.

A critical element to Second Harvest ECI's success is how they address needs and find families willing to take part in their programs. According to the staff at Second Harvest ECI, the key to resolving both of these elements is through constant, open conversation and building meaningful relationships.⁶ In fact, many of these issues end up getting resolved in conjunction with one another. Second Harvest ECI issues an open invitation to all people at the school in conjunction with positive school functions as opposed to punitive circumstances. In addition, there are several standards for potential program enrollees. To be accepted, individuals must have no addictions to illicit substances, must not be homeless, cannot be in an abusive relationship, must not have any undiagnosed mental illnesses, and finally, they must be overall a "good fit" for the program and its requirements. With these preexisting relationships, Second Harvest ECI adapts

⁶ Ibid

their programs and expand opportunities available. The goal of these programs is to ensure that they do not feel like “another hoop” for families to jump through.

Staffing needs are an ongoing challenge for Second Harvest ECI. Tim Kean, the CEO of Second Harvest ECI, has described this process as a “juggling act” in which you must find the balance between volunteers and hired staff. Finances are incredibly limited for most non-profits, so these decisions must come after serious consideration and are heavily dependent on budgetary restrictions. Volunteers are the backbone to all of Second Harvest ECI’s operations. Last year alone, they logged over 27,000 volunteer hours.¹ Along with this, some programs have even started with volunteer efforts and ideas. One program that is heavily dependent on volunteer efforts is the Forward STEPS program.⁷ All the model families are all volunteers. Tim Kean emphasized that more often than not, the need for hired staff presents itself clearly.

The most critical operational function for Second Harvest ECI is cost-effective food acquisition. There are three main sources of food that Second Harvest ECI employs to fill its warehouse.⁸ The first is donations from retailers and the general public. These are very helpful to the efforts, but often lead to a smaller variety of goods. The second source is through a purchasing program where Second Harvest ECI can bid on highly discounted lots of food. The final system in place is the CHOICE program sponsored by Feeding America. Second Harvest ECI uses allocated points to purchase specific foods and goods directly from Feeding America. More costs have to be considered when shipping is added, as some foods need to be delivered via refrigerated trucks and semis. However, labor and maintenance fees are split between Second Harvest ECI and Feeding America to lessen the burden. The goods at Second Harvest ECI range from 70 to 80 different items at any given time and are priced in line with Aldi. However, the shelves are “unlimited” and

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

offer a wider, deeper stock of available goods. Second Harvest ECI can obtain more specific goods than Aldi, which improves the ease of access to food.

Analysis of Second Harvest ECI's financial statements is required to gather a greater understanding of the operational costs associated with running a food distribution organization. While Second Harvest ECI is substantially larger than other food distribution organizations in Delaware County, much can be learned and distilled down to ensure the most effective operations on all levels. These audited financial statements and tax filings are available to the public on Second Harvest ECI's website.

In 2018, Second Harvest ECI received donated food in the sum of \$10,785,112 and distributed \$11,112,342 worth of goods (Second Harvest, 2019). In 2017, they received \$13,016,593 in food and distributed food in the amount of \$12,555,828. This shows us that Second Harvest ECI attempts to keep around a 1:1 ratio with their food costs, suggesting that they quickly distribute all donated food. Looking at the bigger picture, the donated and distributed food were 86.65% and 85% of all 2018 revenues and expenses, respectively.

Second Harvest ECI also sees important revenue flows from three other major categories, contributions and special events, federal awards and grants, and shared costs. Shared costs are costs that incurred by Second Harvest ECI, but are then reimbursed by other organizations, primarily Feeding America. The total of these additional revenues is \$1,572,150, or around 13% of all revenues (Second Harvest, 2019). This shows just how critical food donations are to the success of any food distribution center, but also how important monetary donations are to ensure the operations proceed smoothly. Second Harvest ECI has expenses in several key areas. Outside of food costs, the largest expense incurred is Salaries and Related Expenses which total to \$817,638 (Second Harvest, 2019). In addition, there are \$330,582 worth of costs associated to food

distribution. Utilities and Depreciation expenses total to \$227,351, which are attributable to the large office and warehouse facilities that Second Harvest ECI operates out of.

As of 2018, Second Harvest ECI holds \$327,491 in cash and cash equivalents on hand (Second Harvest, 2019). They also have long term assets in the form of land, buildings, equipment, and vehicles in the total of \$1,994,322 after depreciation (Second Harvest, 2019). The other key asset that Second Harvest ECI carries on their books is \$1,730,775 of food and product inventory. Second Harvest ECI has little to no liabilities on their books, as they only have \$76,367 in total liabilities.

These key financial figures will help illuminate the most important parts of operating a food bank or soup kitchen in the most efficient way. Second Harvest ECI is incredibly diligent in the way they handle their finances, and often lean on the support of volunteers to ensure that they are able to concentrate the resources they have to continue the battle against food insecurity in East Central Indiana.

4. Recommendations

To create the best resource, it is pertinent to outline a few major areas that will serve as the building blocks for operating a successful soup kitchen or food bank. The areas of focus are efficient operations, financial health, safety regulations, and marketing and advertising.

The first area that is critical to the success of any soup kitchen or food bank is efficient operations. A large part of ensuring smooth operations is understanding the demand. If there are several organizations already operating in the area, it would be advised to avoid an overlap in area of reach and time open. If the majority of food serving organizations are open in the evening or at night, consider the possibility of providing a breakfast or lunch program. This will help maximize the amount of impact on the community. A new organization may benefit from creating partnerships with other existing organizations in an attempt to share resources. This leads into another operational success factor, becoming an official partner with Second Harvest ECI and Feeding America. These major organizations will provide food and information on regulatory issues at the highest level of accessibility. To be a formal partner, the new organization needs to become a legal nonprofit organization, a 501(c)(3). In addition to being a membership requirement, this will allow for the operators to limit liability and get beneficial tax breaks.

The final portion of efficient operations is sourcing the proper amount of labor. This includes balancing paid labor and volunteer workers. It is imperative to understand the needs of the organization. There are some jobs that can be accomplished using volunteers, such as serving, cleaning, and stocking shelves, but there is not always a guarantee that the volunteer labor will be of sufficient quality or quantity. There are other tasks that would likely require paid employees, such as a bookkeeper or food procurement manager, but these can become costly. Once you have

a firm understanding of the volunteer pool and the human resources available to you, the areas of need will show themselves.

The second area of focus is financial health. At the end of the day, a soup kitchen is still a business and must maintain financial health. To do this, there are a few benchmarks that the operator can use to ensure that the limited monetary resources are put to use as effectively as possible. To operate, the organization needs a secure source of funding, such as donations and grants. Collecting funds or food from donors will be very helpful, but will not cover all the expenses incurred. Applying for federal or private grants will be a major source of income, so it is necessary to keep an eye open for these opportunities.

Second Harvest ECI, like many non-profits try to maximize their budgets and aim to keep revenues and costs at a one to one ratio. A large portion of the total costs will come as food costs. This means that whatever steps that can be taken to lower overhead and labor costs will be most important. An example on how to limit overhead costs would be to operate out of a shared space, like a church or even an existing soup kitchen that has different hours. Feeding America has programs that help share the costs of delivering food, so take advantage of all the benefits from being an official partner. The final area of the financial statements that should be closely monitored are the liabilities. If possible, avoid any debts or long-term liabilities, as they can quickly eat up the money needed for daily operations.

Third, as a food provider, there are many health and safety regulations that you must follow. Some are more apparent, such as making sure all employees that handle food have washed their hands and are wearing gloves and hairnets, if required. Other regulations are not as simple, like knowing the proper storing temperatures of foods and understanding the true shelf life of goods.⁹

⁹ Ibid

Much of this information will be provided or explained in the process of becoming an official partner with Second Harvest ECI, as they have experts who can help teach how to achieve and maintain safe practices, which Second Harvest ECI requires from any of their partners.¹⁰ This process is long and thorough, but the new organization will be better off for it. Doing the proper research and using the best resources will ensure a safe and clean operation. Formal training and inspections are required, so make sure to budget both time and money appropriately for these. It is always better to be overly cautious than underprepared.

Finally, an organization needs to have an effective marketing plan. Efficient operations and healthy financials are important, but it all means nothing if the people in need do not know about the organization. A new soup kitchen or food pantry needs marketing and advertising that is cost effective, but also reaches the right audience. This means that modern advertisement techniques, like Facebook and Twitter, may not be the right fit. Many people who suffer from food insecurity are not likely to have easy access to the internet, so more traditional methods may be necessary. This could entail going directly to where people are, like homeless shelters, schools, and churches, to spread the news by word of mouth. In addition, posters and billboards in public spaces could reach a larger audience. Additionally, a new organization may find success with a radio or newspaper ad. It is important to remember that food insecure people are of all different backgrounds and socioeconomic classes, so the more mediums of advertisement the better.

¹⁰ Ibid

5. Resource

MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

- Cost effective
- Reach the proper audience
- Modern advertisement techniques (Twitter and Facebook) may not work
- Utilize traditional methods
 - Face to Face at churches, schools, and homeless shelters
 - Billboards
 - Posters in public spaces
 - Radio Ads
 - Newspaper articles



HOW TO HELP

If you are not a food pantry or soup kitchen operator, consider donating your time or money to help in the fight against food insecurity. No amount is too small.

A GUIDE TO FIGHTING FOOD INSECURITY

KAES PETROVIK

EFFICIENT OPERATIONS

Understand the demand

- Diversify hours and location from other operations

Build Relationships and Create Partnerships

- establish partnerships with Second Harvest or Feeding America
- reach out to other organizations about sharing spaces or combined events

Register as a legal nonprofit organization

- 501(c)(3)'s receive special tax treatment

Balance Labor

- decide what jobs can be done by volunteer labor and what requires paid employees



Health and Safety Regulations

- Wash hands, wear gloves, and wear hairnets
- Store food at proper temperatures
- Learn proper shelf lives of goods
- Utilize training materials provided by Feeding America
- Be overly cautious rather than underprepared

FINANCIAL HEALTH

Funding Sources

- Food and monetary donations
- Federal and State grants

Cost and Revenues

- Aim for a 1:1 revenue and costs
- Limit overhead costs
- Take advantage of Feeding America's shared maintenance and shipping cost
- Budget for training and inspections

Liabilities

- Keep amounts of long-term liabilities and debts as small as possible

6. Conclusion

Food insecurity will not go away overnight, nor will it solve itself. On our current trajectory, the problem of hunger will continue to worsen if nothing is done to stop it. The work of Second Harvest ECI is not without major impact, but they alone cannot permanently solve food insecurity. People who are willing to help by starting an independent food pantry or soup kitchen need support to accomplish their goal, and this thesis and resource will hopefully be a part of that success. However, not everybody has the time or resources to contribute in starting an entirely new charity, but that does not mean that their help is not needed. Volunteerism is the life blood of all food distribution charities, now more than ever. The hope is that this thesis will serve as not only a support resource for people who currently or aspire to operate a soup kitchen or food pantry, but also as a wake-up call for those who are looking to help in any way they can. Every meal served, hour working, or dollar donated can help save a life.

7. Works Cited

- Food Security and Nutrition Assistance. (n.d.). Retrieved January 28, 2020, from <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/ag-and-food-statistics-charting-the-essentials/food-security-and-nutrition-assistance/>.
- Lee, J. S., Gundersen, C., Cook, J., Laraia, B., & Johnson, M. A. (2012). Food insecurity and health across the lifespan. *Advances in nutrition (Bethesda, Md.)*, 3(5), 744–745. <https://doi.org/10.3945/an.112.002543>
- Muncie, IN. (n.d.). Retrieved February 13, 2020, from <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/muncie-in>
- Piontak, J. R., & Schulman, M. D. (2014). Food Insecurity in Rural America. *Contexts*, 13(3), 75-77. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1536504214545766>
- Second Harvest Food Bank of East Central Indiana. (2020, May 13). Retrieved January 28, 2020, from <https://curehunger.org/>
- Second Harvest Food Bank of East Central Indiana. (2019). FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION DECEMBER 31, 2018 AND 2017. Retrieved May 21, 2020, from <https://curehunger.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Financial-Statements-12-31-2018-2017.pdf>
- U.S. Hunger Relief Organization. (n.d.). Retrieved January 28, 2020, from <https://www.feedingamerica.org/>